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U.S. at MIDWINTER

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Repression

U.S. Attorney General John N. Mitchell followed his complaint that courts are being "too fair" to defendants with a defense of maintaining wire taps on so-called "radicals." The Department of Justice is taking the issue to the Supreme Court, as it is other issues, to weave a tight and strong net to hold alleged "subversives." The Washington Post reported June 13 that the FBI has an up-to-date "Security Index" of 10,000 names.

Last month, Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.) said (New York Post, May 26) that the Federal Communications Commission maintains a computerized list of alleged "subversives" which it uses as a guide in considering applications for broadcast licenses. He said the FCC gets the names from the FBI and the Justice Department's "Organized Crime" and Racketeering List.

It is known that other lists, maintained by the Army and other armed forces, the CIA and governmental agencies would bring the number of "radicals" on record to several million.

Mitchell told the Virginia State Bar Association on June 11 that "never in our history has this country been confronted with so many revolutionary elements determined to destroy by force the Government and the society it stands for."

Echoing the (Sen. Joe) McCarthy lies of the 1950s, Mitchell that the domestic radicals whose telephones are being tapped without court order "are ideologically and in many instances directly connected with foreign interests."

Mitchell is pressing for a letdown of legal barriers to domestic spying on alleged "radicals" because the courts have rebuked Federal agencies for such practices, as in the recent case of Sister Jogues who is charged in the case of seven lay and clerical persons alleged to have planned to kidnap Henry Kissinger, an advisor to Nixon.

Materials stolen from the Media, Penn., office of the FBI reveals that 40 percent was devoted to spying on persons alleged to be political "radicals," that is critics or opponents of Nixon's policies especially in regard to the war in Vietnam, civil rights, the poor and unemployed.

The pattern of these developments spells repression. It is a warning of the need to fight back in defense of democratic rights.